

WE ARE IN THIS TOGETHER



TAKING CARE
OF CHILDREN IS
OUR **COLLECTIVE**
RESPONSIBILITY.



THE MOST EFFECTIVE SAFEGUARD AGAINST CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT IS **POSITIVE PARENTING.**



Every child has the fundamental right to a safe, loving and healthy home.

But the reality is that a Washington child is abused or neglected every hour, with devastating impacts that can last a lifetime.

Children who are mistreated are more likely to struggle in school, become teenage parents, commit crimes and suffer from mental illness, long-term health issues and substance abuse problems.

Abuse and neglect also incur a staggering economic burden, costing the U.S. economy close to \$104 billion annually, according to a study by Prevent Child Abuse America.

For every dollar Washington state spends on preventing child abuse and neglect, more than \$300 is spent on after-the-fact intervention such as foster care and treatment.

Child abuse and neglect occur in all segments of society, regardless of race and economic and social status, and are more

common and typically subtler than the extreme examples depicted in the media.

The issues may seem overwhelming, but we know that child abuse and neglect are preventable.

Research has repeatedly shown that carefully targeted, well-implemented programs are an effective means of prevention—and also the most cost-effective approach.

The financial costs of abuse and neglect are tremendous, but the personal costs to children are immeasurable. Preventing child abuse and neglect saves not just social costs but also lives.

Keeping children safe and giving them the chance to thrive is one of society's most critical responsibilities and one that we collectively share.

“MY CHILDREN CAN SEE AND FEEL THE CHANGE. IT’S LIKE I’M NOT ANGRY ANYMORE; I’M NOT SPEAKING ANGRY WORDS BECAUSE I WAS GIVEN TOOLS. I WANT TO COME BACK EVERY TIME STRONG FAMILIES IS HERE. I AM EAGER TO LEARN MORE.”

—Parent, Strong Families Program
Central Washington Comprehensive Mental Health, Yakima

WE **UNDERSTAND** HOW
DIFFICULT PARENTING
CAN BE. WE'RE HERE
TO HELP.



Established in 1982 as the Washington Council for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect, the Council for Children & Families was the first state agency in the nation created solely to prevent child abuse and neglect.

Since the start, we have been a leader in promoting child and family development and raising public awareness about abuse and neglect. We do this by collaborating with partners statewide to fund community-based programs that proactively help families before intervention becomes necessary.

We provide research on critical issues around parent support and prevention and lead the state's efforts to prevent shaken baby syndrome and promote awareness of postpartum depression.

We work with government agencies and stakeholders to inform the policy process. It's our responsibility to ensure that legislators have the knowledge and understanding they need to develop policies that best protect children and strengthen families.

We also lead community and systems change efforts such as Child Abuse Prevention Month and Strengthening Families Washington, an initiative aimed at improving early care and education for children.

We are involved in prevention efforts at the national level through our partnership with the National Alliance of Children's

Trust and Prevention Funds and as a state chapter of Prevent Child Abuse America.

Additionally, we administer the Children's Trust Fund of Washington, raising public and private donations through innovative funding strategies that do not increase taxes. Those include the sale of our Keep Kids Safe specialty license plates and Heirloom Birth Certificates.

The Council for Children & Families is led by a 15-member council that includes state legislators and representatives from other government agencies, plus seven community leaders appointed by the governor to represent a citizen's point of view.

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**"MY DOULA IS AN ESSENTIAL
SOURCE OF SUPPORT. SHE
CONSTANTLY REMINDS ME OF
MY STRENGTHS. I'M A MUCH
BETTER MOM BECAUSE OF
MY DOULA."**

—Homeless teen mom,
CAPA Attachment Doula Program
Catholic Charities of Spokane

WE WORK **COLLABORATIVELY**
TO BUILD STRONG FAMILIES.
WE SUPPORT CHILDREN BY
SUPPORTING PARENTS.



From parent support groups that reduce social isolation to programs that teach fathers about child development, the Council for Children & Families focuses on initiatives that strengthen families and encourage safe, nurturing home environments.

We select programs for funding through a rigorous evaluation process, investing in initiatives that show positive outcomes. Since 1982, CCF has funded upwards of 250 prevention-based programs at more than 200 agencies.

Based on research about what works best to prevent child abuse and neglect, we invest in the following types of initiatives.

- **Home visitation programs** focused on healthy parenting and child development, early literacy and school readiness
- **Parent education programs** that use a formal structure and curriculum to help parents develop parenting skills

- **Parent support activities** that give parents a social support network and environment in which to build positive parenting behaviors

- **Crisis nurseries** that offer respite care and support to families in crisis

Our support doesn't end with a grant.

We work in partnership with our funded programs, taking an active role in frontline prevention. We provide assistance to help programs develop cultural relevancy, measure outcomes and build capacity so they remain sustainable after our funding ends.

"I PARTICIPATED IN THE NURTURING PARENTING GROUP CLASS SERIES AS A CHILDREN'S FACILITATOR, AND I WAS SO IMPRESSED WITH THE STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION OF THE PROGRAM."

—Volunteer professional, Nurturing Families Program
Young Children & Family Programs of the Palouse, Pullman

TOGETHER WE CAN **PREVENT** ABUSE AND NEGLECT.



We believe society has a responsibility to proactively support parents and provide them with a foundation for being the best caregivers they can be.

Prevention-focused programs give parents skills to understand their children's needs and strategies to cope with challenges. They improve children's chances of developing in healthy, supportive environments and reaching their full potential.

Prevention is a moral imperative, but it's also the only way to avoid long-term social costs associated with child abuse and neglect.

Ways you can help prevent child abuse:

- Reach out to other parents in your community; start a playgroup or offer to help vulnerable children and families.
- Discipline your child thoughtfully, using praise and privileges to encourage good behavior and time-outs to help your child regain control.
- Examine your behavior. Words and actions can inflict deep, lasting wounds. Through your actions, show children and other adults that conflicts can be settled without hitting or yelling.

- Get involved with community efforts to support children and parents, such as after-school activities, parent education classes, mentoring programs and advocacy.
- Teach children that they are special and have the right to be safe.
- Invest in prevention programs, such as parenting education and home visits.
- Know the signs of abuse and report it to police or child protective services. When speaking with children about abuse, assure the child that he or she did the right thing by telling an adult and is not responsible for what happened.

Individual actions matter, but preventing child abuse and neglect takes a societal effort. Together, we can promote universal supports for parents and services that help families meet their specific needs. Together, we can help foster a society that understands and genuinely values the importance of children.

We encourage you to join us in supporting families and promoting the safe, healthy development of all children.



Together we can **prevent** abuse and neglect

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Prevent Child Abuse
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